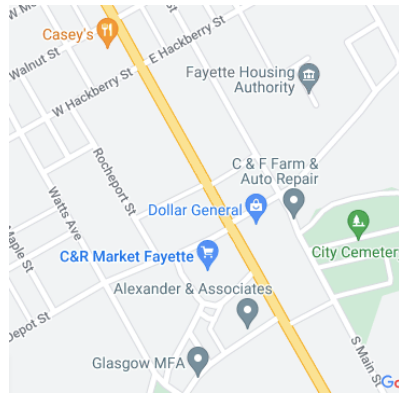


Fayette's Original Prestige Neighborhood - South Main

The South Main Street Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999.



The South Main Street Historic District contains residential properties located on South Main Street in Fayette, Missouri. The properties are located between 200 South Main Street and 312 South Main Street. The South Main Street Historic District is located one block from the town square and covers approximately 8.75 acres. Main Street runs northwest to southeast. North Main Street begins at the Central Methodist College campus on the North edge of downtown and becomes South Main Street just past the town square and the Howard County Courthouse. The properties included within the South Main Street Historic District

boundaries represent the most historically intact residential area of South Main Street. The boundaries of the South Main Street Historic District encompass the intact residential properties of South Main Street as well as the portion of South Main Street (the 300 block) where the brick paving remains intact. The District includes the portion of the street which retains its brick paving, as well as a brick sidewalk and iron fence — both of which are in front of 312 South Main Street.

The houses in the South Main Street Historic District date from the mid-1820's to 1935. Seven of the lots included in the South Main Street Historic District were part of the original plat of the town. The houses in the South Main Street Historic District represent a range of styles popular in the mid-19th to early 20th centuries including high styles such as Italianate, Queen Anne, Bungalow, and Colonial Revival, as well as vernacular combinations of styles and forms. The three earliest houses in the South Main Street Historic District are constructed of brick while the rest are frame. All of the houses in the South Main Street Historic District were originally constructed as single family dwellings, and all continue to serve in a residential capacity today, although that use has changed somewhat.

The South Main Street Historic District's close proximity to the town square and its prominent location along the major southern entrance into town undoubtedly contributed to its establishment, early in Fayette's history, as a favored neighborhood for many of the town's most distinguished citizens.

The area was home to Fayette's doctors, lawyers, bankers, business owners, and leading agriculturalists. Not only were the inhabitants affiliated through their business affairs, but many of the South Main Street residents were also related by blood or marriage. As a result, the neighborhood functioned as a tightly knit community.

The residential buildings on South Main Street, as a group, are architecturally significant. The architectural styles and vernacular forms of the buildings in the South Main Street Historic District are typical of those found in cities and towns across America in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Moreover, the chronological development of the residential buildings on South Main Street reflects the evolution of Fayette from its early settlement through its heyday in the late nineteenth century. The South Main Street Historic District, like the town of Fayette, largely completed its architectural development in the 1930s. Today, it continues to reflect the mix of architectural styles and types found throughout Fayette's residential areas in the early twentieth century.

Construction in the District began ca1825, the date of construction of the oldest house in the South Main Street Historic District, and runs until ca1935, the date of construction of the newest house in the district.

Hiram Fugate is credited as the first permanent settler of what is now the town of Fayette. He arrived in Howard County in 1812 and built a log cabin on the present site of Central Methodist College. Several years later, in 1816, Howard County was formed, and Henry Vest Bingham, the father of famed painter George Caleb Bingham, was elected the first judge of the county. Bingham divided the county into seven townships and selected a committee to pick out the site of the county seat. The site where Fayette is now located "was chosen for its smoothness and the fact that it drained well." In addition, the location of the town is said to have been chosen in part because of a small settlement which had grown up around a spring near two of the main roads in the county. That spring was located just east of 308 South Main Street. A small group of settlers had camped there in 1818 to take advantage of the abundant water. After a severe drought dried up most other area springs, they decided to make their settlement permanent, and were still in the area when it was time to establish a county seat. Hiram Fugate and another settler, Hickerson Burnham, each donated 25 acres of land for the county seat, which was named for the French hero of the American Revolution, Lafayette.



Alfred Morrison surveyed and laid out Fayette. In 1823, the original town of Fayette was platted. "The original town was a rectangle, about three blocks wide and seven blocks long, with a public 'square' in the center."

Alfred Morrison built Lilac Hill, south of Fayette about 1830.

Curiously enough, Morrison did not orient the streets of Fayette with the cardinal directions. Instead, the square was platted with its sides running north 31°-West 30°. "Oral tradition within the Morrison clan ascribes the rationale for this decision as an attempt to have sunlight reach the street on all four sides of the Square for the maximum hours each day.

The original plat of Fayette included 150 lots, bounded on the North by Crib Street, on the South by Hackberry Street, on the East by Mulberry Street and on the West by Water Street. The four streets which lead to the town square were 1st Main on the East, 2nd Main on the West, 1st Main Cross on the South, and 2nd Main Cross on the North. The confusion caused by this similarity in street names resulted in the names being changed around 1900. 1st Main became Main Street; 2nd Main became Church Street; 1st Main Cross became Morrison Street; and 2nd Main Cross became Davis Street.

In 1826, the town of Fayette was incorporated, with Samuel T. Crews, Elijah Whitton, Lawrence J. Daly, Joseph Gill, and Robert Wilson serving as trustees. Fayette was reincorporated in 1830 and the first mayor, W. R. Snelson, was elected in 1855. The town prospered in its early years. Howard County's economy was based on agricultural products and many of Fayette's wealthier citizens owned large plantations outside the city limits. Many of these early inhabitants were farmers from Kentucky and the Upland south. Consequently, the area was extensively rooted in the traditions and agricultural practices of the agrarian south.

The Civil War years were hard on Fayette, as it was occupied several times by Union forces who used buildings on what is now the campus of Central Methodist University as their headquarters.

In the years after the war, Fayette was fortunate to be the county seat. Rural citizens could come into town with business at the courthouse and also take advantage of the goods and services of local merchants. In addition, many families moved to Fayette so their children could be educated at one of the colleges.

By 1876, fifty years after the town was platted, only a few additions had been made to the city's boundaries; however, that was to change dramatically within the next fifty years. Fayette's first major expansion was organized by several of the town's prominent citizens who formed the Fayette Town Company in 1887 and made considerable additions to the South and west. By 1920, the Fayette city limits had grown to cover more than a square mile.

By the late 1800s, Fayette's economy was thriving as the railroad carried people and products to and from Fayette, and many factories and new businesses formed. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Fayette continued to prosper, and many of the large houses on South Main Street were built during this period. In 1909, the streets bordering the Square and South Main Street to Depot Street, the main southern entrance to town, were paved with brick.

Not only was South Main Street the main southern entrance into Fayette at the time, it is also likely that the wealthy residents of the neighborhood were some of Fayette's first automobile owners. Several years later, the citizens of Main Street had the 'main' street moved one block west to South Church Street so that auto traffic would not lumber past their houses. South Church Street was paved from the square south 3/4 of a mile, and thereafter became the main southern entrance into town.



Residential development south of the commercial area probably began with the construction of the Joseph Shepard/Joseph Davis House at 208 South Main Street. It is the oldest house in the district, and one of the oldest brick residences anywhere in Fayette. In 1825, Joseph Shepard purchased Lot 43 in the town of Fayette for \$46.50. Three years later, he sold the property with a brick house and log cabin on it for \$370. Little is known about Shepard, as he does not appear in any of the local histories. However, based on a notice

signed by Shepard for a special election for the Board of Trustees of Fayette which appeared in the Missouri Intelligencer in 1827, it would appear that he was either a city clerk or secretary or he was a member of the Board of Trustees of Fayette.

In 1842, Shepard sold the property to Joseph Davis, who owned it until 1859. Davis is credited with the addition of the later brick portion of the house. A biographical sketch about Joseph Davis' son states that "Winchester Davis was born June 21, 1844, in the house built by his father at the Northeast corner of Main and Hackberry Streets." Thus, it appears that the brick portion of the house reached its final form between 1842, the year Davis bought the property, and 1844, the year Winchester was born.

Joseph Davis was one of Fayette's most prominent early citizens. Davis was born in Kentucky in 1804, and moved to Missouri in 1818. He worked as a clerk in the land office in Old Franklin and, at the age of eighteen, was appointed a commissioner to mark and lay out the Santa Fe Trail from Missouri to New Mexico. He served as a Colonel in the "Indian conflicts" and in the Mormon War and then moved to St. Louis to study law.

Davis returned to the Boonslick and set up his law practice in Fayette. He served Howard County in the state legislature for two sessions and participated in many local civic activities. He is perhaps best known as the defendant in the first important criminal case in Fayette. Davis' altercation with General Owen was recounted in 1973 in the Fayette Democrat-Leader. "Davis (known as Colonel Joe Davis) was sitting in his office, ...in the fall of 1835. It was nearly noon. General Owen came to the door of the office and spoke threatening language to the colonel, intimating that he would take his life when he attempted to leave his office. Colonel Davis told the general, in a quiet way, that if he did not leave, he would kill him. Owen, however, remained, continuing to abuse Davis, until the latter was ready to go to his dinner. Davis having, in the meantime, had his gun (a rifle) brought to him, raised it, and took deliberate aim at Owen killing him almost immediately. Davis was acquitted of the murder on the grounds that he killed in self-defense.



In the late 1850s, Davis constructed his large country home, Woodlawn, and sold the brick house on South Main Street.



A contemporary of Joseph Davis and the second doctor in Fayette, Dr. Samuel Tribble Crews, built the second oldest house in the district, 310 South Main Street. Samuel Crews was born in Madison County, Kentucky in 1800. He received his medical training at Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky and then moved to Fayette in 1825. Dr. Crews' medical practice grew steadily as did his real estate holdings in Howard County and later in

Texas and he quickly became a highly esteemed citizen of Fayette. He was one of the original trustees of the town and was active in Fayette's community affairs throughout his lifetime.

In 1828, Dr. Crews married Miss Elizabeth Ward, and it is likely that the construction of their brick I-house on South Main Street occurred about the same time. Apparently, Dr. Crews used the first floor of his home as his office and shared this space with John M. Ryland, a Fayette lawyer. On June 14, 1827, Ryland published a notice in the Missouri Intelligencer to inform the public "that his Law Office is kept in the front room of Doct. S. T. Crews' brick house in Fayette." In 1835, Dr. Crews moved out to his farm five miles east of town, where he lived until the close of the Civil War. After the war, he moved back to the house on South Main Street and lived there for the remainder of his life.



In 1850, Samuel Crews sold a one acre plot of land north of his house (the property known today as 308 South Main Street) to Beverly Shepperd for \$250. The same day, Shepperd sold the same piece of property for a profit of \$200. Therefore, it is assumed that the property had a building on it by 1850. In 1853, the property and dwelling was purchased by Benjamin Smith. Smith, whose wealth apparently grew along with the new town of Fayette, had a

large frame I-house added to the front of the original house. This addition was built by Joseph Megraw. Megraw and his son, William Joseph Megraw, built many of Fayette's large homes.

Edwin Bedford, who married Thomas Payne's daughter, Nora, became a cashier at the Fayette Bank in 1879. In 1901, the Bedford's bought the Payne House at 308 South Main Street from Thomas Payne's widow and conducted extensive remodeling of the house. Nora Bedford's first son, Thomas, lived in the house on South Main Street most of his life, but he did not follow in his father's profession. Instead, he studied electrical engineering at MIT and worked in Boston for several years before returning to Fayette to sell insurance and manage the family farm. Edwin Jefferson Bedford, Edwin and Nora's younger son, did, however, stay on with the Fayette Bank until it closed during the depression. Although Thomas and Edwin Bedford died in the 1950s, the property stayed in the Bedford family, used as a summer home, until the house and its contents were auctioned off in 1986.

In January, 1867, Smith sold the house and a total of 2.57 acres of land to Thomas Payne, an area banker and community leader. The property remained in Payne's family for the next 119 years. Upon Payne's death, it became the property of his daughter, Nora, and son-in-law, Edwin Walton Bedford. Both Thomas Payne and Edwin Bedford were engaged in the banking business in Fayette.

Thomas Payne was born in Scott County, Kentucky in 1820, and moved to Missouri with his parents in 1822. Payne lived on his father, Robert Payne's, farm until the Civil War came to Missouri and he moved his wife and family into Fayette. Payne began his profession in the banking business as a clerk in the "State Bank" where he worked with cashier Adam Hendrix. In 1865, Payne and Hendrix opened the private bank of "A. Hendrix and Co." Payne sold out to Hendrix in 1869 and was instrumental in the creation and operation of the Fayette Bank until his death in 1901. Although banking was Payne's primary business, he also served as a notary public and county surveyor for many years.

The business relationship between Thomas Payne and Robert Patrick is just one example of the many connections, which were both familial and business-related, between the residents of the South Main Street neighborhood.

During the development of the District, four families owned twelve of the sixteen houses in the South Main Street Historic District. At the North end of the district, there were the Howard and Denneny families — two sets of brothers. Joseph Howard and James Denneny lived next door to each other at 300 and 304 South Main Street, and their brothers, Thomas Howard and Joseph Denneny lived across the street at 305 and 303 South Main Street, respectively. The house at 304 S. Main now serves as a residential care facility.



Laura and Katherine Denneny, the younger sisters of James and Joseph, also lived a few houses north at 204 South Main Street. The Payne family occupied the middle section of the district, Thomas Payne and, later, his daughter and son-in-law, Nora and Edwin Bedford, at 308 South Main, and Robert Payne at 306. Samuel Crews and his descendants owned the four houses at the South end of the district. Samuel Crews, lived at 310 South Main; his daughter and son-in-law, Margaret and Julius Ferguson lived at 312, and his granddaughter, Sarah Crigler Tolson, and her husband, John, owned both 307 and 311 South Main Street. John Tolson's father, Judge B. H. Tolson also lived in the district for a short time at 303 South Main, the former home of Henry Givens and the future home of Joseph Denneny.

The neighborhood was home to two judges, B. H. Tolson and A. W. Walker, and two doctors, Samuel Crews and Henry Givens. Other business relationships between the neighborhood residents included a partnership between Robert Payne and James Denneny in the Payne and Denneny Drug Company and between John Tolson and one of Samuel Crews' sons in the dry goods business of Tolson, Pankey and Crews. Officers for all three of the banks in Fayette were represented in the South Main Street Historic District. From the Farmer's and Merchants Bank, there was Henry Givens; from the Commercial Bank, there was Thomas Howard; and from the Fayette Bank, there was Joseph Denneny, Thomas Payne, his nephew, Robert Payne, and his son-in-law, Edwin Bedford

One of the first high-style houses to be built in the South Main Street Historic District was erected ca1878 for John D. Tolson at 307 South Main Street. Tolson, an entrepreneurial businessman, bought a one acre lot from Robert M. Patrick and his wife, Martha, in 1876. Tolson paid the Patrick's \$1000 for the property.



John Tolson, was born in Howard County in 1843 and was educated at Central College until it was temporarily closed when the Civil War broke out. After the war, Tolson opened his own dry goods business, J. D. Tolson & Co. in Fayette. In 1865, he took on two partners and the firm became Tolson, Pankey & Crews, but he retired to farming two years later. In 1874, Tolson entered the mercantile business again, dealing in hardware and later adding groceries. In 1877, he disposed of the grocery branch of his trade, but continued to deal in farming implements and machinery. In 1883, Mr. Tolson consolidated his farming implements and machinery business with the grocery, grain etc., firm of Boughner & Hughes. At the same time Mr. Hughes retired and Mr. Smith took his place and the restructured business became Boughner, Tolson and Smith. In the 1883 Missouri Gazetteer, John Tolson is listed at a manufacturer of corn planters. Later in life, he served as Fayette's postmaster. His house on South Main Street stayed in the Tolson family until 1946.



John Tolson also built the house at 311 South Main, the John Tolson/Johnny Reynolds House. In 1880, Tolson bought Lots 1, 2, 9, and 10 in Payne & Patrick's Addition, from Robert M. Patrick and his wife, Martha for \$600. Four years later, he sold Lot 1 to William Dudgeon for \$1700, a price which indicates that a house had been constructed on the property while Tolson owned it. Evidently, Dudgeon did not make payments on the \$1200 loan he had secured to buy the property, because in November, 1887, the property reverted back to

Tolson. In March, 1888 John M. Reynolds bought the house, and it stayed in the Reynolds family until the late-1930's.[15] John Reynolds is listed in the 1900 Howard County Census as a farmer, but he does not appear in any of the county histories.

The largest and most elaborate house on South Main Street was built in 1883 for Julius Cesar Ferguson and his wife, Margaret. J.C. Ferguson was born near New Franklin in Howard County, Missouri. He was educated at Central College in Fayette, Missouri University and the University of Virginia. After graduating from college, Mr. Ferguson returned to Howard County and became a prominent farmer. In 1858, he married Margaret Crews, the daughter of Dr. Samuel Tribble Crews, and they lived on their large farm outside Fayette. In the early 1880's, Mr. Ferguson built the Queen Anne house at 310 S. Main.



When the house was complete in 1884, he retired from farming and moved his family into town. According to the "Walking Tour of Historic Fayette", Mr. Ferguson was reputed to "have owned the most valuable land in Howard County." In his later years, Mr. Ferguson helped organize the Rich Hill Bank, served as the bank's president for many years, and was very active in Fayette's civic affairs. Mrs. Margaret Ferguson was also highly regarded in the community; the local chapter of the Eastern Star is named after her.

South Main Street's second doctor, Dr. Henry K. Givens, moved into the



neighborhood in the mid-1880's. He built the house at 303 South Main but lived in it for less than ten years. Dr. Givens was educated at the St. Louis Medical College before setting up his practice with Uriel S. Wright in Fayette. In 1889, Dr. Givens retired from the medical profession to become cashier of the Farmers' and Merchants' Bank in Fayette. He was elected president of the bank in 1906

and served in this capacity for many years. Dr. Givens was also very active in the educational development of Fayette, serving as a curator for Howard Payne College for more than forty two years, and on the public school board for thirty-two years.

In the mid-1890's, Dr. Givens sold his house on South Main Street to Judge B. H. Tolson. Judge Tolson was a teacher and a farmer for many years, but he spent his later years as a Justice of the Peace and then a County Judge. Judge Tolson was the father of John D. Tolson, who lived a few doors down at 307 South Main Street. According to Howard County Tax records, the property passed from B. H. Tolson to a Sarah D. Stonum around the turn of the century and remained in her ownership until the mid-teens. Sarah Stonum is listed with the Denneny family in the Howard County Cemetery Records, but the relationship between Stonum and Denneny is unclear. However, a picture of this house in the 1905 Picturesque Fayette, is labeled as the "Home of J. B. Denneny" and later tax records do indicate that Joseph B. Denneny's wife, Linnie, owned the house from before 1920 into the 1950's. Joseph B. Denneny was born and educated in Howard County. In 1897, he became a bookkeeper for the Fayette Bank and soon moved up the ranks to the position of president.

Although James Denneny, was, like his brother, a successful businessman in Fayette, less is known about him. Their parents immigrated to America from Ireland in 1866, and soon made their way to Missouri.

According to James Denny's biography in the History of Northeast Missouri. James Denny's parents "rented what is known as the Thomas J. Payne farm, a place on which [they] lived for the long period of thirty-six years." James R. Denny was one of the proprietors of the Payne and Denny Drug Company in Fayette. R. W. Payne, Denny's partner in the drug store, was the nephew of Thomas Payne. Shortly after the turn of the century, around the time he began working for Joseph Denny at the Fayette Bank, R. W. Payne bought the house between his former partner, James Denny and his uncle, Thomas Payne. James Denny and his wife lived in the house at 304 South Main Street for more than forty years.

Around the same time the Freeman/Denny house was being constructed, ca.1895, Ida L. Keller had her house built at 306 South Main. Keller is listed as a hay goods merchant in the 1900 Census and as a dry goods merchant in the 1898-99 Gazetteer, but little else is known about her, as she is not listed in any of the county histories. Shortly after the turn of the century, R.W. Payne purchased the Keller Home, and the house stayed in his family through the mid-twentieth century.

Robert W. Payne, the nephew of Thomas J. Payne who owned the house just to the south at 308 South Main Street, was born and raised in Howard County. After completing his college education, he entered into business with Joseph Denny in 1888. For twenty-five years, he "assisted in conducting the leading and the most popular drug store in Fayette," the Payne and Denny Drug Company. [18] in 1908, he followed in his uncle's footsteps in the banking business and took the position of vice-president at the Fayette Bank.



Another banker, Thomas Howard, and his brother, Joseph Howard, were responsible for the next two additions to the developing neighborhood. In 1901, Thomas Howard had the house at 305 South Main Street built for him and his family by William Joseph Megraw.

Thomas Howard was born and raised in Howard County on his parent's large farm of more than 2,000 acres. In 1890, he began farming his own 500 acres, raising hogs and breeding Aberdeen Angus cattle. After retiring from farming and moving to town, he was instrumental in the organization of the Commercial Bank of Fayette. Howard served as the bank president from 1903 until 1922 when it became the Commercial Trust Company.



A few years after Thomas Howard had his house built, Joseph Howard, his younger brother, built a house across the street, at the southeast corner of South Main Street and Hackberry Street. Like his brother, Joseph Howard was born and raised in Howard County. After graduating from Central College, he returned to his father's farm to continue his training as a agriculturalist. Within a few years, he had established his own farm, known as Sunny Slope, just south of Fayette. The Joseph Howard house at 300 South Main Street was

built between 1905 and 1908 and stayed in the Howard family until the 1940's.

The last of large grand homes on South Main Street was constructed for Judge Allen Warren Walker at 301 S. Main between 1908 and 1911. Judge Walker was born in St. Charles County, MO, and came to Fayette to attend Central College. After he graduated in 1888, he taught school in Clarence, MO for three years and then returned to Fayette as principal of the Central College Academy. In 1895, Judge Walker was admitted to the Missouri Bar and began practicing law in Fayette. He served as city attorney and prosecuting attorney for two terms.



Several years later, he was elected Circuit Judge and re-elected in 1922. In 1906, Judge Walker married Clementine Williams, a graduate of Howard-Payne College and the Chicago Institute. The Walker house type is American Four-Square.

The residential development of the southern part of Main Street concluded in the first decades of the twentieth century with the construction of three relatively unpretentious Bungalows and a modest Colonial Revival house. The Bungalows were built in the half block between the commercial area surrounding the square and the oldest house in the district, the Joseph Shepard/Joseph Davis House. These later houses were built by citizens of more modest means than their neighbors further down the block.



The house on the southeast corner of Walnut Street and South Main appears to have been built by local photographer, V.M. Grigsby. Grigsby was credited for most of the photographs included in the 1905 Picturesque Fayette Only Grigsby's photography studio appears on the 1902 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, but by 1910, the house had been built behind the photography studio.

Between 1920 and 1925, South Main Street's other two Bungalow style houses were built. R.M. Moon, one of the proprietors of the Deatherage and Moon Automobile Company, built the house at 202 South Main Street. The Denneny sisters, Laura and Katherine, are credited with the construction of 204 South Main. Laura and Katherine were the younger sisters of Joseph and James R. Denneny. The 1913 History of Northeast Missouri notes that Laura and Katherine Denneny were still living on their father's farm at that time. However, their father, John Denneny passed away in 1913. The family farm was probably sold after his death and the two women moved to town.



Robert Wilhoit, the owner of Bob Wilhoit and Son Service Station, a business that operated on Highway 5 in Fayette, built the last house in the district, 309 South Main Street, but he owned the house for less than ten years. His Colonial Revival house was built on a small lot between the two houses built by John Tolson, 307 and 311 South Main, around 1935. The Wilhoit family achieved prominence throughout Missouri capitalizing on America's new found passion in the early twentieth

century, the automobile. They owned service stations throughout the state. The family eventually built a brick Home on the edge of the Fayette Golf Course. The South Main Street Historic District has changed little in the years since the Wilhoit House was constructed. Although additions have been erected on several of the houses.

The houses of the South Main Street Historic District, are, as a group, typical of those found in cities and towns across America in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Moreover, the chronological development of the residential buildings on South Main Street, from simple vernacular forms to high style architect designed houses, reflects the evolution of Fayette from its early settlement through its heyday in the late nineteenth century, to its current form.

The earliest houses in the South Main Street Historic District are vernacular buildings. The forms chosen, Hall & Parlor and I-House, were popular throughout the Midwest in the first half of the nineteenth century. However, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as improved transportation and communication facilitated the rapid dissemination of new ideas and fashions, and as Fayette prospered, the latest architectural styles began appearing on houses in Fayette's neighborhoods, particularly along South Main Street.

Between 1880 and 1910, the largest and most elaborate houses on South Main Street were built. These houses were designed in the most popular styles of the period, Italianate, Queen Anne, and Vernacular Victorian. Later, after World War I when Fayette's and indeed, the nation's, economy began to falter, the more modest Bungalow and Colonial Revival houses in the district were constructed.

The Joseph Shepard/Joseph Davis house, the oldest house in the South Main Street Historic District, and one of the earliest brick residences in all of Fayette, is the only Hall & Parlor house within the district boundaries. It probably started as a single room house under the ownership of Joseph Shepard and was expanded into its Hall and Parlor form by Joseph Davis. The Hall & Parlor is a traditional British house form which was brought to Missouri predominately by settlers from Kentucky and Virginia.

Joseph Davis, like many of the original families that settled in Howard County, came from Madison County, Kentucky. Hall & Parlor houses typically are two rooms wide and one room deep and have a side gable roof. The chimney is frequently located on one of the gable ends, but may also be placed in the center of the gable. Common variations to the basic form include front porches and rear additions which expand the living space, as in the case with the Joseph Shepard/Joseph Davis house.

The South Main Street Historic District has three I-houses, the Dr. Samuel T. Crews House at 310 South Main Street, the Thomas Payne/Edwin Bedford House at 308 South Main Street and the John Tolson/Johnny Reynolds House at 311 South Main Street. The I-house form represented the next step in the architectural development of Fayette. While the modest Hall & Parlor houses were built almost solely for their value as shelter, I-houses demonstrated that their owners had greater wealth.

The term I-house was coined by geographer, Fred Kniffen, because so many homes of this type are to be found in Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa. I-houses, also a traditional British house type, are by definition one room deep and at least two rooms. They may be two to five bays wide, have various chimney placements, have one or two story front porches, and often have high style decorative features. One and two story rear kitchen ells were common, either as a later addition, or as the original house, as is the case with the Bedford House.

The popularity of I-houses in Howard County may be attributed to the fact that a majority of the earliest settlers came from Virginia and Kentucky, where I-houses were extremely common.

The Dr. Samuel T. Crews house was the earliest I-house built on South Main Street, and it is the only brick I-house in the South Main Street Historic District. The Crews house, built in the 1830's, originally featured Federal style detailing and a small portico over the front door.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Fayette prospered. On October 13, 1886, the editor of the Howard County Advertiser wrote, "While towns all around us show absolutely no life beyond a mere existence, Fayette is putting up a dozen or two houses, and more are in contemplation. Not a town within a hundred miles of us is doing better than Fayette, and not a half dozen so well."

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, several factories opened in Fayette, including a feather renovating house, a creamery, and a bustle factory. It was during this period that many of the town's largest and most elaborate houses were built. Fayette's prominent citizens began remodeling their houses or building new houses to reflect the current architectural styles. Ten of the sixteen houses in the South Main Street Historic District were built between 1880 and 1910.

In the late nineteenth century, bolder Italianate style ornamentation replaced the refined Federal detailing on both the Crews House and the Bedford House, and the John Tolson/Johnny Reynolds House, the third I-House in the district, was built with Italianate ornamentation. Large front porches replaced the smaller porticos on the Crews and Bedford houses, and all three houses now feature the roof brackets and large friezes characteristic of the Italianate style.

John Tolson and H.K. Given's built the South Main Street Historic District's first two high-style Italianate houses. Tolson, a dealer of farming implements and machinery and one of the stockholders in the Best Bustle Factory built his house at 307 South Main Street around 1878.

The three houses on the north end of the South Main Street Historic District, the V. M. Grigsby House at 200 South Main ca. 1905, the R. M. Moon House at 202 South Main (ca. 1923) and the Denneny Sisters House at 204 South Main Street (ca. 1923) as well as the Robert Wilhoit House at 309 South Main Street (ca. 1935) differ greatly from the earlier houses in the district.

Not only do these houses reflect a renewed interest in a pre-machine age and a simpler, more informal way of life, but also they mimic the more modest economy of Fayette in the early twentieth century. Although many of the businesses established during 1880's and 1890's lasted into the early decades of the twentieth century and beyond, Fayette's boom years were over by the turn of century.



The last house to be built in the South Main Street Historic District, the Robert Wilhoit House at 309 South Main (ca. 1935) is the only Colonial Revival house on South Main Street. This house signaled the end of the architectural development of the district.

It is interesting to note that the last house built in the district was built in a style that was a reaction against the modern architecture and was, in effect, squeezed into the heart of the district unlike the bungalows which seem to have almost been relegated to the edge.

The Wilhoit House fits Carole Rifkind's textbook example of a Period Revival house in the 1930's. It looks to early American houses for its form and detailing and is quaint and informal, but carefully disciplined. However, unlike Period Revival houses built earlier in the twentieth century, the Wilhoit House, like other Period Revival houses constructed in the 1930's "has simpler massing, less lavish use of materials, cruder detailing, and more economical scale."

Mary Ellen McVicker noted in her "History of Fayette and the Boonslick Area" in the summary report for the Fayette Survey that "In many ways one of the chief assets of Fayette is the fact that the town is still in [a] World War I time capsule." This statement can also be applied to South Main Street Historic District. The district is a time capsule of the architectural development of Fayette, the predominate styles and types are represented and few substantive changes have occurred since the period of significance. Overall, the South Main Street Historic District today appears very much as it did when family members and business associates lived side by side, and South Main was one of Fayette's preferred residential neighborhoods.